AMBALAPUZHA T. S. NANDAKUMAR

— A Teacher par excellence

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At a time when the 'drums' of the world are uniting to form a 'fusion rhythm' by absorbing the Laya cultures of the world over, our own Avanaddha Vadyas (Percussion instruments) grouped as "pakka" and "upa pakka' vadyas (major and minor instruments) have been clamoring for recognition, some perhaps, even struggling to survive. And ensembling them and taking them to classical heights is a Herculean task requiring more than a creative mind and perceptive perseverance.

It is heartening to note that a young Guru of Mumbai, Ambalapuzha T.S.Nandakumar has not only dared where angels feared but also accomplished success and carved a niche in the field of art.

Hailing from a family of musicians who had specialized in Nagaswaram, viz, the renowned Ambalapuzha Brothers, and Dancer Ramunni well-known in Kerala. T.S.Nandakumar imbibed Sruti and Laya right from the cradle and showed his potential even as a boy of seven. And coming under the great Guru Kaithavana Madhava Das, a master known for his disciplined training, the child's creative impulse and rhythm perception were carefully molded and there blossomed after 8 years of Gurukul an artist of great promise.

Today after years he stands as one of Renowned Mridangists and a teacher par excellence. Nandakumar's quest for intricate rhythmic variations and finer permutations and combinations, combined with his zeal for teaching and training have yielded double-rich dividends : 1. of his own meteoric rise on the performing forum, as an amiable accompanist and 2. in systematic training of students, giving them proper direction,encouragement and inspiration.